## Message Text

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R 131612Z JAN 78 FM AMEMBASSY ROME TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9868 INFO AMCONSUL GENOA AMCONSUL MILAN AMCONSUL TURIN

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MILAN PASS FOR TURIN

E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: BDIS, ELAB, IT

SUBJECT: TORRINGTON COMPANY PROBLEM

REF.: GENOA 0015

- 1. TORRINGTON INTERNATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT ROBERT WASSUNG AND ROME ATTORNEY PETER ALEGI VISITED EMBASSY 1/13 TO REPORT RESULTS OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH GEPI. MEETING DAY BEFORE RESULTED IN LETTER OF INTENT BETWEEN TORRINGTON AND GEPI FOR LATTER TO PURCHASE ASSETS, WITH EXCEPTION OF NEEDLE-MAKING MACHINERY.
- 2. ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF LETTER OF INTENT INCLUDE: AGREEMENT BY GEPI TO ENTER INTO PURCHASE CONTRACT BY 2/28; COMMITMENT BY GEPI TO CLEAR FACTORY OF WORKERS NOW OCCUPYING TORRINGTON PLANT BY END OF APRIL (WHICH IS IMPORTANT FEATURE SINCE IT RELIEVES TORRINGTON OF THIS ONEROUS TASK); TORRINGTON HAS SIX MONTHS TO REMOVE THEIR NEEDLE PRODUCTION MACHINERY, E.E., BY 10/30; TORRINGTON WILL NOT ISSUE TITLE UNTIL MACHINERY IS REMOVED. PRICE AGREED TO WAS 1.1 BILLION LIRE WHICH REFLECTS BEST COMPROMISE ATTAINABLE.

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3. WASUNG CONFIRMED GEPI'S INTENTION TO TURN PLANT OVER TO LEBOSSEY OF FRANCE, WHICH WOULD RESUME PRODUCTION OF NEEDLES IN ITALY WHICH WOULD BE COMPETITIVE WITH TORRINGTON. WASSUNG, HOWEVER, DOUBTS LEBOSSEY'S CAPABILITY SINCE THEY HAVE BEEN OUT OF THIS BUSINESS FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. TORRINGTON STILL SUPPLIES ITALY FROM ITS U.S. FACTORY.

4. TORRINGTON REQUESTED NO FURTHER INTERVENTION BY THE EMBASSY, OTHER THAN A PAT ON THE BACK TO GEPI'S NEGOTIATOR, DR. MASSEROLI. HOWEVER, THEY AND EMBASSY AGREE THAT WE SHOULD MONITOR ADHEREENCE BY GEPI TO LETTER OF INTENT, SHOULD TORRINGTON NEED ASSISTANCE IN EVENT GEPI DOES NOT LIVE UP TO TERMS OF AGREEMENT. BARRING SUCH DEVELOPMENT, THIS LONG-STANDING CASE APPEARS TO BE SETTLED. GARDNER

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